



Mayor Mark Farrell
Phil Ginsburg, General Manager

Date: February 7, 2018

To: Recreation and Park Commission
Capital Committee

Through: Philip A. Ginsburg, General Manager
Toks Ajike, Acting Director of Capital and Planning Division

From: Melinda Stockmann, Project Manager

Subject: Panhandle Playground Concept Design

Agenda Wording

Discussion and possible action to approve the conceptual design for Panhandle Playground, a Let's PlaySF! Initiative project. Approval of this proposed action by the Commission is the Approval Action as defined by S.F. Administrative Code Chapter 31.

Strategic Plan

Strategy 1: Inspire Public Space

Objective: Strengthen the quality of existing parks and facilities

Strategy 2: Inspire Play

Objective: Strengthen and promote the safety, health, and well-being of San Francisco's youth and seniors

Background

Panhandle Playground is located at the intersection of Oak and Ashbury, within the Panhandle Park. It is located in Supervisorial District 5. The existing playground is approximately 7,000 square feet in size.

This project is one of 13 playgrounds that will be renovated across the City as part of the Let's Play SF! Initiative. The Let's PlaySF! is a partnership between San Francisco's Recreation and Parks Department and the San Francisco Parks Alliance to renovate the City's worst playgrounds. These playgrounds serve 20,000 children and were selected for renovation by a Playgrounds Task Force because they contain unhealthy wood or are in low-to moderate-income neighborhoods dense with children.

In 2014, Panhandle Playground received a "D" grade on the Parks Alliance's playground report card. The playground contains arsenic-treated wood in the play structure and round swing sets.



The renovation of Panhandle Playground, as part of the Let'sPlaySF! Initiative, is driven by the transformative power of play:

Wellness: playgrounds encourage kids to get outside, away from screens. Outdoor play burns calories and helps develop muscle strength, and coordination and can foster a lifelong love of outdoor activities

Creativity: Playgrounds nurture growing brains by promoting imaginative and cooperative play that can foster advanced cognitive skills in young brains

Community: Playgrounds bring people together. They allow people to connect across social, economic and age group divides.

Community Process

The Recreation and Park Department (RPD), with support from the San Francisco Parks Alliance and landscape architecture consultant RHAA Landscape Architecture and Planning, has spent the last nine months collecting and integrating extensive input from community members to inform the development of the attached concept design.

In addition to publicizing workshops and this Commission hearing via postal mailing to neighbors in the immediate vicinity, the project team has maintained- and continued to expand- an extensive email stakeholder outreach list. This outreach list includes attendees of meetings, folks who RSVP'd to meetings via Eventbrite, relevant Parks Alliance contacts, online survey respondents, and people who have contacted the project team via phone or email with questions. At present, it includes over 400 people.

Community workshops were held on the following dates: May 31, 2017, October 19, 2017, and December 9, 2017. Following each community workshop, presentation and meeting materials were shared on the Recreation and Park Department project page and via email to our stakeholders list and an opportunity for community members to provide input via an online survey was also extended following each workshop. In addition to the community workshops, the project team presented at two neighborhood association meetings in July (North of Panhandle Neighborhood Association (NOPNA) and Haight Ashbury Neighborhood Coalition (HANC)) and convened two adult focus group meetings in August and two focus group meetings with elementary school children in September.

The team publicized the workshops and online surveys via door to door outreach, Parks Alliance newsletter, Supervisor Breed's newsletter and Facebook page, Recreation and Park Weekly eNews and Facebook page, Nextdoor.com, relevant Facebook interest groups and flyers posted at the playground as well as at the nearby Park Branch Library.

During the remainder of the project, including construction document preparation, bid / award phase and construction, the public will be informed of key milestones through the RPD website project page and e-mails to stakeholders.

Concept Design

The Panhandle Playground redesign maximizes the play benefits of the playground space. It is designed to incorporate all types of play experiences, including solitary play, parallel play, cooperative play, onlooker play, constructive play, dramatic play, competitive play and physical play. The playground is fully accessible and includes activities that appeal to all types of learners. The design incorporates traditional play structures and non-traditional play elements in a thematic setting that links it psychologically to its surrounding context. The Panhandle Playground redesign was inspired by San Francisco's natural and cultural environment. The design draws upon surrounding physical characteristics of the San Francisco area, spanning from the hills to the coast. As users enter the space, they will come across four play areas. To the west, a spiraling concrete pathway with musical and sensory play elements leads up to the top of an embankment approximately -four feet above entry grade. This hillside recalls the hilly topography of San Francisco. The embankment provides a number of climbing and sliding play options including ropes, handholds, rings, a slide and scramble steps. The embankment play surfacing is artificial turf with a planted edge between fence line and the path.

At the base of the embankment a central play zone with a belt swing set and a large wooden climbing structure provides play elements for school age children. This area is 2 ½ feet below the entry grade and is accessed via an ADA ramp on the south edge and sets of steps on the northern edge. Terraces along the northern edge provides seating for parents and caregivers and additional informal play space.

A small embankment separates the school age play area and a tot age play area and supports a tot age slide. The tot age play area has colorful surfacing resembling the natural beach landscape and has a see-saw, spinner and bucket swings. Two picnic tables anchor the eastern end of the playground, providing gathering space. Continuous linear seating elements around the northern and southern edges provide ample seating.

A shell shaped sand play area occupies the northeast corner of the playground. This area is bordered by a double-sided bench seat and accessed by a double gate. Children will find shells, and sea animals on the base of the sand area as they dig.

The playground will have three entry points. The main entrance has shifted from the eastern edge to the northeast to allow better connectivity with the existing restroom and to provide better separation between the recreation space and Recreation and Park maintenance area. The entry on the southern end has shifted to the eastern side of the playground to allow for the embankment on the western end. The remaining entry follows the approximate footprint of the existing northwestern entry. Other improvements include regrading adjacent pathways, replanting areas adjacent to the playground's fence line, tree pruning and removal, and making modest improvements to the Recreation and Park maintenance area, including replacement of fencing.

Sources and Uses of Funding

Sources

2012 Clean and Safe Neighborhood Parks Bond	\$2,200,000
Private Grant, San Francisco Parks Alliance	\$1,000,000
Total Sources	\$3,200,000

Uses	
Construction / hard costs	\$2,000,000
Softs costs	\$1,200,000
Total Uses	\$3,200,000

Project Schedule

Planning	Spring 2017 – Winter 2018
Design	Winter 2018 – Fall 2018
Bid/Award	Fall 2018 –Spring 2019
Construction	Spring 2019 – Fall 2019
Close-Out	Fall 2019 – Winter 2019

Environmental Review

The project has been reviewed by the Planning Department (Case No. 2017-011776ENV) and was issued a Categorical Exemption under Class 1 – Existing Facilities and Class 3 - New Construction/ Conversion of Small Structures.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Commission approve the conceptual design to renovate Panhandle Playground. Approval of this proposed action by the Commission is the Approval Action as defined by S.F. Administrative Code Chapter 31.

Supported By

Community meeting attendees and survey respondents
 North of Panhandle Neighborhood Association (NOPNA)
 Haight Ashbury Neighborhood Coalition (HANC)
 New Traditions YMCA After School Program
 San Francisco Day School
 Save the Sand SF
 Board President London Breed
 San Francisco Parks Alliance

Opposed By

None known

Attachments

Exhibit A. Conceptual Design Graphics for Panhandle Playground
 Exhibit B. CEQA Determination